

I was an early adopter to XM Satellite Radio because I was able to get the quality programming that local AM/FM could not, or refused to, provide. Having read the limitation on all of satellite radios' licenses, it is clear that XM's, and Sirius', national broadcasts of traffic and weather for major metropolitan cities complies with the letter and spirit of the law. Folks in Denver can listen to Boston traffic; the service is not limited to Boston only. When the FCC promulgated and adopted a loosening of media companies' ownership restrictions, those actions were based on the principle that free-competition would make all media better. AM and FM stations are enjoying the fruits of those rule changes and now seek to limit the legitimate business of the satellite radio broadcasters through unfair limitations. If one considers the "slippery slope" of the NAB's basic complaint, neither XM nor Sirius would be allowed to broadcast any feeds from CNN or Fox News to the cities where the news is happening and, therefore, relevant. That is to say, if there was a major catastrophic event in Washington, DC, because it is local to DC, XM would be forced to block out that portion of the broadcast.

Local radio will always be a necessary and helpful element in broadcasting. Local radio must, however, adopt to changes in the marketplace. Perhaps, instead of complaining that XM and Sirius are delivering what consumers want, including instant traffic and weather, AM and FM stations, the vast majority of which are owned by national conglomerates, should pool their resources and develop local channels with nothing but traffic and weather, much the way the cable industry developed C-Span to keep people informed of the goings on within their government.

XM's traffic and weather are an invaluable part of the service for which I pay. If AM and FM had done its job and given me what I wanted, I might not be an XM subscriber. Now, I'm hooked.